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Implementing the Brezhnev Doctrine

Leonid Brezhnev laid down the doctrine "once communist always communist." The eve of decision on aid to the Nicaraguan contras, the last obstacle to consolidation of a communist regime there, is a good time to consider how the Brezhnev doctrine is being implemented in Nicaragua. After taking power the Sandinistas moved quietly and quickly to eliminate non-communist leaders and clamp down on all opposition. This was accomplished with extensive Cuban assistance and heavy Soviet, Bulgarian, and East German involvement.

The mechanism is made up of:

-- The army, which is loyal to the party as opposed to the state, with political commissars sharing equal status with military commanders.

-- A strong Directorate General of State Security which contains a number of sections and departments solely devoted to population control.

-- A Committee for the Defense of Sandinismo modeled on the classic communist bloc committee system and the Red Guard patterns of the Soviet Union and Communist China.

-- A well-developed penal and police system under control of the Ministry of Interior.

-- A special investigative unit within the Ministry of Interior to ensure party loyalty and a similar counterintelligence unit within the military to ensure political loyalty of military commanders.

This system is not unique to Nicaragua and can be found in the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, throughout Eastern Europe, Cuba, South Yemen, and Ethiopia. In short, this system can be found in every communist country. Without it, communist countries cannot survive.

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What has and is this machinery accomplishing? To understand exactly what this system accomplishes, one only needs to look in some depth at the internal security organization, the Directorate General for State Security (DGSE). It has the following departments:

-- A department responsible for containing ideological diversions which monitors and controls the activities of the Church and the media.

-- A department doing telephone taps, mail censorship, physical surveillance, audio operations, and all forms of surreptitious entry, focused almost exclusively on the Nicaraguan internal opposition.

-- A department responsible for territorial security which supervises the "divine mobs" (the goon squads which are used for mass rallies and expressions of pro-Sandinista support).

-- A department responsible for the block committees which control and report on the population and activities on a block-by-block basis throughout the country.

-- A department responsible for controlling the activities of opposition political parties, tasked to target directly on the free political parties, free labor unions, as well as other independent organizations. Its objective is to cause internal friction within those organizations and where possible engineer their collapse.

The Directorate General for State Security, which evaluates itself as having been most successful in penetrating the opposition political parties, for causing the Conservative Party to split into four factions, for having increased

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dissidence within the Social Democratic Party and the Social Christian Party, and disrupting relations between the two parties, is now beginning to target the Independent Liberal Party. It is now successfully manipulating the activities of the two free labor unions and credits itself with having created conflicts both within and between these unions which prevented them from re-incorporating affiliate unions which the DGSE had previously been successful in splitting off. It also credits itself with having frustrated and blocked the activities of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise.

In 1979, prior to the Sandinista takeover, Nicaragua had one prison which was used to detain political prisoners. Today, seven years after the Sandinistas assumed power, they have increased this to 11 prison facilities. The prisons are holding some 9,000 inmates of which 6,500 are political prisoners. These prisoners are held under emergency decree with no legal recourse whatsoever.

In addition to this system for internal repression, the Sandinistas are in the process of organizing a system similar to that in the Soviet Union and Cuba to institutionalize the management of revolutionary efforts throughout the hemisphere.

Two Sandinista organizations are involved in this effort. The Department of International Relations is charged with the responsibility for developing and maintaining contacts with parties and insurgent groups throughout Latin America. The DRI is the focal point for administrative support of the many trainees from various Central American countries currently receiving instructions in subversive techniques in Nicaragua. It is patterned on the International Department of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the America Department of the Cuban Communist Party. This outfit works with communist and radical groups in Latin America on an increasingly close basis with the America Department of the Cuban Communist Party.

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The Ministry of Interior is responsible for foreign intelligence. One of its functions is to work closely with the DRI in spotting and developing contact with subversive elements in foreign countries. Military elements of the Ministry of Interior, and to a lesser extent special forces units of the armed forces, are responsible in conjunction with the DRI for conducting subversive training.

Using this system, the Sandinistas are providing support to the insurgency in El Salvador. In fact, the insurgency in El Salvador is dependent upon Sandinista support for its survival. Additionally, Sandinistas are supporting the insurgent efforts in Guatemala, attempting to foment revolution in Honduras, undermine the government of Costa Rica, support the M-19 insurgency in Colombia, and provide assistance to the insurgents in Ecuador. Additionally, they have established close associations with the Montoneros in Uruguay and have exceedingly close relations with exiled Chilean communists.

The inescapable conclusion is that the Sandinista regime is intent on pressing ahead with its policy to export revolution. It is doing so in close coordination with Cuba, and through Cuba with the Soviet Union. The goal of this effort is to gain power and influence in the Western Hemisphere and undermine the geopolitical-security interests of the United States. This is a long-term undertaking. With a consolidated base on the American mainland, the overall capability of the Soviet Bloc to achieve their objectives will be greatly enhanced. The Sandinistas, drawing on the support from Cuba and the Soviet Union, will have impact far beyond their own capabilities.

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